

## Joint National Training Capability: The Next Wave In Transformation

The word transformation means more to top Pentagon officials than buying new technology for warfighters; it also means changing the way the military trains for future conflicts.

For those officials, transformation cuts across a number of Defense Department activities, and training is one area that must be fundamentally altered to achieve Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld's vision of a military force that is better equipped for the 21st century security environment.

The project has been dubbed training transformation, or T2, by Pentagon leaders, and it is one of the secretary's top priorities, several defense sources tell *Inside the Pentagon*.

"We need to train like we fight, and fight like we train, and, too often, we don't," Rumsfeld has said.

And that calls for enhanced joint training, according to Paul Mayberry, deputy under secretary of defense for readiness. Beefing up joint training could help pave the way for "transforming units of the various services into integrated joint forces," he told *ITP* earlier this month.

Earlier last year, Rumsfeld approved a "Strategic Plan for Transforming DOD Training," around the time he signed the Defense Planning Guidance. The plan was prepared by multiple defense components, including Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness David Chu's office, the services, Joint Staff and U.S. Joint Forces Command.

One of the top goals identified in the plan is establishing a joint national training capability (JNTC), which would give military commanders the tools to regularly train troops from multiple services across the globe, using live-fire ranges that are networked with training simulators and augmented by computer-generated "synthetic forces," sources say.

Upgrading and certifying existing service training ranges for joint training are major goals of the project.

T2 and JNTC are "among the most viable and highest-payoff transformational initiatives in the works today," Mayberry said. They "can be achieved even as we in the Department of Defense go about fighting the global war on terror."

Other goals include establishing requirements for the services to track the joint training, education and operational experience of personnel, and setting up a "Joint T2 Investment Strategy and Fund to encourage innovation, initiative, agility and substantive change," the strategic plan states.

Chu's office is working with various defense components to complete a T2 implementation plan, which could be delivered to Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz by April 1, sources say. The implementation plan, to be updated annually, would identify responsibilities, time lines and metrics for meeting the goals set in the T2 strategic plan. It also would help guide defense-wide policy and resource decisions, Chu wrote in a Nov. 8 memo to senior Pentagon leaders (*ITP*, Nov. 21, 2002, p1).

Already, elements of the T2 vision are beginning to take form, in particular the joint national training capability. Much of the work in getting JNTC off the ground has fallen to Joint Forces Command. The Pentagon is aiming to achieve JNTC initial operational capability by October next year.

The Defense Department is requesting \$135 million in fiscal year 2004 for JNTC, as part of the overall Pentagon request for T2, according to Mayberry. The Pentagon also is working on an FY-03 reprogramming request that would funnel \$52 million to the JNTC effort. The T2 budget exceeds \$1 billion across the future years defense plan, sources say.

### **The second wave**

JNTC could represent a second wave of training transformation, some defense officials say. The first occurred when the services in recent decades established major training centers, like the Army's National Training Center at Ft. Irwin, CA.

The major service training centers employed realistic combat training, opposing forces, "ground truth," and feedback mechanisms to evaluate performance. JNTC could build on existing service capabilities at the major training sites, which include the Marine Corps Twentynine Palms, CA, facility; Nellis Air Force Base, NV; and the Navy's West Coast ranges. As part of the JNTC initiative, the training methods and activities proven to be effective at the service training centers will be extended to a joint context, defense officials say.

Each particular training center has been geared toward training forces from just that service, even though other services occasionally are asked to participate in a limited fashion. The JNTC would "help bring additional capabilities [to those] ranges to enable one service's participation in another's event . . . [in] a joint context" -- at the tactical and command and control level, Mayberry said.

Defense officials expect the JNTC will allow for realistic multiservice combat training, employing joint doctrine and techniques, rigorous live training mixed with simulations, information operations and fully integrated intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance activities. Activities at service training areas could be networked with faraway locations, so that officials at JFCOM's Joint Warfighting Center in Suffolk, VA, for example, could participate in exercises.

"We could have live forces out on the ground at Ft. Irwin, Twentynine Palms, and we could be floating ships that are participating in an exercise out in the Pacific Ocean -- and they can all be part of one exercise, accomplishing the specific joint tactical task in the training venue [JFCOM] sets up," Army Col. Bryan Stephens told *ITP* earlier this month. Stephens is chief of the capabilities group at JFCOM's Joint Warfighting Center, which is overseeing the creation of the command's JNTC Joint Management Office.

Opposing forces could present asymmetric threats, defense sources say. JNTC also could involve integrated range instrumentation, and trainers and observers who examine activities from a joint perspective.

Financial incentives will be offered to the services through JFCOM to help them adapt their training facilities for joint activities, defense sources say. In addition, JFCOM is working with the services to define joint training architectures, which would encompass everything from instrumentation to opposing force assets, Greg Knapp, JFCOM's program manager for JNTC, said in an interview.

"JFCOM is not going to acquire systems per se; we're not getting into the acquisition business," Knapp said. "However, we will be working with the services, and when technology needs to be joint we'll assist [them] by providing . . . architecture guidance."

Money also will flow from JFCOM to the services to pay for "near-term activities," including troop movements and leases on communications lines, he said.

Conducting joint exercises at service-run training centers will help "grow a group of officers and enlisted men and women who are familiar with joint doctrine, tactics, techniques and procedures, and are used to working with the other services," Stephens said.

Lack of joint experience has been a problem in conflicts like Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan, sources told *ITP*.

The Defense Department tends to "throw together a task force of some sort to accomplish some mission," Stephens said. Often, the disparate organizations -- or the individuals in them -- that make up the task force have not worked together in the past, he said. Also, "there may be some gaps and seams with the doctrine, the tactics, techniques and procedures that they use to prosecute the war, or whatever it is they're asked to do," he added.

The JNTC project will give service members needed experience in joint warfighting, expedite the process of integrating different elements of joint task forces, and make those forces more effective, Stephens said.

According to Mayberry, the services have embraced the JNTC initiative, in part due to lessons learned on the battlefield.

The services still are "responsible and dedicated to their Title 10 [of the U.S. Code] training responsibilities, but they have truly stepped forward in endorsing . . . joint training concepts to provide a better, more robust type of exercise with this notion of a joint context within their existing service training exercises," he said.

### **Setting standards**

JFCOM's role in implementing the JNTC will include setting joint training requirements, in consultation with combatant commands and the services, such as technical standards for training facilities and related programs. JFCOM also will assess joint training activities to determine how warfighting capabilities can be improved.

The command's JNTC Joint Management Office, led by Navy Capt. Howard Thorp, is being set up to carry out those tasks. By the time initial operational capability is achieved in October 2004, the office could have 55 civilian and 35 military billets, according to Knapp.

In addition, the command will accredit JNTC events and certify training facilities to make sure they comply with department-wide architectures and standards for realistic joint training, according to a Jan. 2 JFCOM report.

In accrediting an event, JFCOM officials at the outset will consider the "joint context . . . to be accomplished," and when the event is over, they will determine if that mission was successful, Thorp said in an interview.

"We accredit the event; we do not get into the business of grading the forces. . . . The services maintain that type of oversight," he said.

However, the services may eventually have more confidence in the readiness of units that participated in accredited JNTC events, he continued. "What should occur is an evolutionary process of [the services] wanting to participate to increase their readiness . . . so that they have a full spectrum of capability when they show up at the combatant commander's door."

Certification, on the other hand, will focus on the technology needed to conduct accredited JNTC events.

"In order for us to ensure interoperability among the various service sites, nodes and training facilities, we have to in essence certify . . . that they have the proper infrastructure and instrumentation in order to provide the capabilities and the joint context necessary to conduct a JNTC event," Stephens said.

In the next few years, JFCOM could certify between 30 and 50 different training sites, according to Knapp.

The first ones could be certified this year, possibly Ft. Irwin, Twentynine Palms, Nellis and certain West Coast ranges for the Navy. Certification would allow them to participate in the first major JNTC event, currently under development, Stephens said.

"We'll probably do a series of bridging events leading up to [the] major JNTC event later in the year," he said. "We're trying to scope the exercise now based on the availability of resources."

Mayberry said the Defense Department hopes to conduct the first major JNTC event sometime this summer. The so-called bridging events could help JFCOM figure out command and control problems associated with the JNTC, he added. "We've never done this notion of JNTC before, so we still have to learn quite a bit," he said.

### **Looking back, moving forward**

In planning for future JNTC events, JFCOM officials are using lessons learned from Millennium Challenge 2002, which the command sponsored.

The experiment, conducted last summer as the Defense Department's first major joint experiment, was designed to test new joint warfighting concepts and technologies (*ITP*, Aug. 15, 2002, p3).

MC02 featured live forces operating at eight locations in the United States and participants in remote simulation centers, all of whom were linked together into a single integrated training environment.

The experiment "provided a successful demonstration of how a realistic joint battlespace can be created through linking live forces, ranges, virtual simulators, and constructive simulations over a large geographic area," Stephens said in the Jan. 2 JFCOM report.

"There were a lot of technologies demonstrated in Millennium Challenge on the live, virtual, constructive side that [are] directly applicable [to JNTC], and we're using that when possible, or improving that, to meet [our] goals," Knapp told *ITP*.

Millennium Challenge was a "good launching point" for figuring out how to implement the JNTC, Knapp said.

JFCOM officials expect JNTC events to be "more routine," and with experience gained during MCO2, those events should cost less than last summer's experiment, he said.

The command is working to set up a national communications infrastructure to connect various training sites, according to Knapp. Eventually, sites outside the continental United States could be connected, he added. A key goal is to be able to "immediately set up events," as opposed engineering them from scratch every time, which can be costly, he said.

"We're eventually going to need to deploy this concept, [and] we're going to need to work this with NATO allies," Mayberry said.

In the future, joint urban operations and other cutting-edge Defense Department initiatives could be integrated with the JNTC work, he added.

"There are a variety of other issues that demand this overall distributed training capability, whether it's homeland security, interagency [actions] or how we go about training with our coalition partners," Mayberry said.

-- *Keith J. Costa*